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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 LIMA 004854

SIPDIS

WHA/AND FOR JOAQUIN MONSERRATE
WHA FOR BRUCE FRIEDMAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/03/2015

TAGS: [PINR](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PE](#)

SUBJECT: HUMALA FEINTS TO THE CENTER, BUT CONTINUES TO
FLIRT WITH THE FAR LEFT

REF: A. LIMA 4132

[1](#)B. LIMA 4968 (03)

Classified By: Polcouns Alexander Margulies. Reason: 1.4(b/d).

Summary:

[1](#)1. (C) Peruvian ultra-nationalist and Chavez admirer Ollanta Humala has recently made efforts to position himself -- at least rhetorically -- closer to the political center. Over the last month, he has publicly rejected the New Years Eve 2004 rebellion his brother, Antauro Humala, led in Andahuaylas; distanced himself from Chavez-style confrontation with the United States; and forsworn his family's "Ethno-Cacerista" political identity (Ref B). Despite the recent moderate pose, Ollanta still speaks highly of Chavez, is discussing an electoral alliance with far left parties, opposes opening up Peru's ports to foreign investment, favors the "industrialization" of the coca leaf, and has pledged to review contracts with foreign oil companies if elected President. Ollanta is skilled at putting a moderate-seeming face on basically radical, pro-cocalero positions. A recent national poll put him in fourth place for President with 11 percent of the electorate.
End Summary.

My Brother's Rebellion, Not Mine

[1](#)2. (U) Ollanta has accused the press of trying "to mix my brother's violent discourse with my own." He recently publicly rejected his brother's abortive rebellion in Andahuaylas last New Year's, an event that left four policemen dead and Antauro Humala and large numbers of his followers in jail. Ollanta contrasted the Andahuaylas putsch with his own uprising against Fujimori in October 2000, stating that he acted "in defense of the Republic's constitutional order" with the support of the people. On various occasions, Ollanta has stated that while he loves his brother and his family (who are supporting Antauro), in politics "everyone has their own road." Ollanta says that there is no need to resort to violence because "Hugo Chavez' government demonstrates that revolutionary changes can be made through democracy." Ollanta has rejected accusations that he plans to support a possible Congressional campaign by his brother so the latter, if elected, could obtain legislative immunity. Recently, he told a television audience that he "had never said he would have corrupt politicians shot," an explicit threat his brother Antauro repeatedly made in public statements.

Taking Distance from Chavez' Anti-Americanism

[1](#)3. (C) While Humala cites Chavez as a democratic example, he has been careful to stake out a certain distance from the Venezuelan President. He repeatedly stated in a recent interview that he has never met Chavez and does not know him personally. (Comment: We understand that Ollanta met Chavez last July in Lima. End Comment.) Asked if a future Ollanta Humala government in Peru would follow Chavez' lead, Ollanta replied that Peru follows "distinct dynamics." Venezuela, he said, was the fourth largest oil-producing country in the world, "but it has problems with the United States. I don't think Peru has any reason to enter into this political collision (between Washington and Caracas)."

Breaking with the Family Ideology

[1](#)4. (U) Ollanta says that he is not an Ethnocacerista, a follower of the radical, nativist, quasi-racist, pro-coca, anti-U.S., anti-Chilean ideology created by his father and propagated by his brother, Antauro, for the last several years in a newspaper named after Ollanta himself (Ref B). Ollanta claims that his own Peruvian Nationalist Party (PNP)

is separate and distinct from the remaining Ethnocaceristas. Ollanta also says he now rejects positions taken in the Ethnocacerista newspaper "Ollanta" that he said made excuses for Sendero Luminoso. He characterized those viewpoints as "crazy." (Note: The newspaper "Ollanta" has not appeared on Peru's streets for about a year. It disappeared from view several months before Antauro Humala's abortive Andahuaylas rebellion. End Note.)

15. (U) Ollanta claims that his party represents "the nationalism of the French under occupation (during World War II)." (Note: The Ethnocacerista newspaper "Ollanta" frequently protested that Peru was a colony of the U.S. End Note.) While Ollanta himself concedes that Peru needs foreign investment to develop, he opposes port privatization and calls for renegotiating contracts with foreign companies. In a recent interview, he alleged that foreign oil companies buy Peruvian crude oil for USD 8/barrel and sell the same oil back to Peru at international market prices. He calls for the industrialization of coca and protectionism for agriculture.

16. (C) Ollanta Humala's alleged break with his brother was questioned by the Lima daily "La Republica," which reported on 6/11 that Ollanta had purchased an electoral kit from the official elections registry (ONPE) with the intention of registering the Ethno-Cacerista Party in August of this year. The previous April, he had purchased a similar kit for his Peruvian Nationalist Party.

The Hard Left Still His Best Bet

17. (C) The hard left communists have been longing to run behind Ollanta Humala, given the latter's strong showing in national polls, where he places fourth (Ref B). While Humala has toned down his rhetoric, his party is discussing an alliance with the New Left Movement (MNI), and on 11/5 the MNI voted to accept a PNP proposal to form an electoral alliance called The Front for National Salvation (FSN). The details, however, still have to be worked out, with Humala saying that he would accept an alliance if the leftist parties stress their nationalist values rather than their Marxist ideology. (Note: Humala was not in Lima when the MNI voted. Instead, his party's Secretary General, Francisco Rojas, delivered the proposal for an alliance. End Note.)

18. (C) Members of the socialist camp are also holding the door open to Ollanta. Peru Socialist Party (PSP, formerly the Democratic Decentralized Party-PDD) leader Javier Diaz Canseco told the press that his group "could talk with Ollanta Humala" on 11/3. Other leftist parties have said the same, although former Women's Affairs Minister Susana Villaran has rejected allying her social democratic party with Ollanta.

19. (U) Ollanta submitted a request to register his party to the National Electoral Council (JNE) on 11/14 along with three boxes of signatures. (He needs 130,000 valid signatures to register his PNP.) Should Humala succeed in registering the PNP, this could influence his negotiations with the left.

Comment:

10. (C) Ollanta is offering a Chavez-like slick package for a discontented electorate, staying deliberately vague about plans and proposals and adopting a moderate tone, even when promoting positions that are basically cocalero and statist. In an 11/13 appearance on Channel 5's "Electoral Pulse" program, Ollanta appeared in suit and tie. During the program, he called for a new constitution, the revision of foreign contracts, state control over major resources and the "patenting" of the coca leaf to protect the livelihood of the "two hundred and fifty thousand families" who live off this product. When pressed for details on his plans for reform, Ollanta demurred, saying that both his party and his candidacy were young, and would define the details over time. He averred that his only "radicalism" was in wanting a state that would respond to citizens' needs. Ollanta wrapped himself in the cause of poor farmers who, he said, were compelled to carry out agricultural strikes due to impossible economic conditions and state institutions that did nothing to alleviate the farmers' plight.

11. (C) There are indications that Ollanta's style and message could gain some traction. A recent national poll by the Apoyo consultancy, reported in Lima daily "El Comercio" on 11/13, shows Ollanta's support rising from 8 to 11 percent from October to November. (Ollanta stood at 5 percent in an April survey by Apoyo.) Regionally, Ollanta's support is concentrated in the south and the southern altiplano. The regional concentration indicates that even if he does not win nationally, Ollanta could remain a troublesome thorn in the

side of a new government as an advocate for cocaleros and small farmers.

112. (C) As the smaller parties scramble to join electoral alliances in advance of the April 2006 general election, Ollanta hovers as a beacon, a wild card "outsider" candidate whose charisma tempts fascists and Marxists alike. Should the left, socialist and communist, unite behind Ollanta -- in combination with cocaleros and small farmers -- he would become an even more formidable electoral presence. Post will continue to monitor Ollanta's political courtships as they develop during this wedding season of pre-electoral alliance-making.

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